



# Special Education Programs

## SPED PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

### 2018-2019 Parent Surveys

Parents need to complete and **return the surveys by May 31, 2019**. If you should need more copies or you are in need of a Spanish version, please contact Special Education Programs at 773-4257. Or districts can provide parents the links to the online surveys. Links are provided below.

[www.surveymonkey.com/s/Q6JW6HJ](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Q6JW6HJ) (English), and

[www.surveymonkey.com/s/MJNWNVJ](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/MJNWNVJ) (Spanish)

**Congratulations** to Shannon Merkouris from the Sioux Falls School District. Shannon is the 2019 Parent Nominated Special Education Staff of the Year Award Winner! Shannon received her award at the 2019 SD Special Education Conference. 18 of the 22 staff who were nominated were able to attend the conference and be recognized by their peers. Thank you all for your dedication to your students and families!



## DOE PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

### Seeking presentation proposals for 2019 Indian Education Summit

The South Dakota Indian Education Summit targets educators of all content areas and grade levels, as well as administrators and school board members. The goal of the summit is to provide training on best practices in the field of Indian education. Have an idea for a presentation to share with your colleagues? Submit a proposal today! The 2019 summit is scheduled for Sept. 22-24 in Pierre.

### Need to renew your certificate this year? Applications due July 1

Educators whose certificates expire July 1 of this year are strongly encouraged to submit their renewal applications as soon as possible. Early application ensures optimal processing. Processing time is typically eight weeks, but during the summer months, may exceed 10 weeks.

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Abilities Dedication  
Acceptance  
Inclusion Evolving  
Independence  
Special Access  
Individual Success  
Unique Education  
Accommodating Integration  
Hope Achieve  
Opportunity Challenges  
Participation  
Understanding

### SPED STAFF:

**Linda Turner**, Director

**Wendy Trujillo**, Assistant Director

**Rebecca Cain**, Program Specialist

**Angel Corrales**, Data Manager

**Melissa Flor**, Program Specialist

**Jodi Berscheid**, 619 Coordinator

**Stacey Meyer**, Program Specialist

**Beth Schiltz**, Program Specialist

**Brandi Gerry**, Program Specialist

**Kristin Jerome**, Secretary

### Regional Representative List

**Contact: 605.773.3678**

### NEXT SPED DIRECTOR CALL:

April 16, 2019- 10am CST

Connect through Adobe Connect:

<https://taese.adobeconnect.com/sdta>

Teleconference Line: 888-387-8686

Participant code: 7757975

### Agenda Items:

- ◆ IDEA Federal Application
- ◆ ECF Applications
- ◆ IEP Workshops
- ◆ IEP TA Guide

## SPED Feature Presentation

### OUTSTANDING EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONAL NOMINATIONS

Special Education Programs hosted an Early Childhood Professional nomination for two Outstanding Early Childhood Professional in March. The following educators were nominated for their dedicated work in Early Childhood Special Education Programs.

Amie Edwards—*Sioux Falls*

April Johnston—*Cornbelt Ed. Coop*

Michelle Kurtz—*South Central Coop*

Cody Lukkes—*Yankton*

Brandi Petersen—*West Central*

Lyndsay Rasmussen—*North Central Special Ed. COOP*

Tara Sietz—*Rutland*

Abby Voss—*Dakota Valley*

Cindy Young—*Todd County*

### WINNERS



Lyndsey Rasmussen



Abby Voss

We want to personally thank you all for having the dedication and drive to help young children learn and grow.

## DOE PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS CONT...

**State mentoring program looking for recruits.** The state's Mentoring Program pairs first-year teachers with veteran teachers to help guide those who are new to the profession. The program was established with the Blue Ribbon Task Force legislation in 2016. Options also are available for districts that would like to run the mentoring program locally. Applications for those interested in becoming mentors are due May 1. Applications for new teachers are due June 15. Late hires will be given an opportunity to participate. [Learn more.](#)

## FEDERAL PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

### OSEP Policy Letter

February 21, 2019: Letter to Siegel addresses questions regarding a child with a disability who transfers to a new local educational agency during the summer.

### OSERS posts four new letters in January

WASHINGTON, DC (Feb. 13, 2019) – The U.S. Department of Education released four letters responding to requests for guidance Jan. 29.

The letters address students with disabilities in correctional facilities, discipline procedures, children with disabilities place in private schools by their parents, and response to intervention.

## SPED PROGRAMS STAFF HIGHLIGHT



**Melissa Flor**

Areas of Expertise: Accountability Specialist

Regional Representative: 7 (Rapid City Area)

Indicators: 5, 9, and 10

Contact Information: [Melissa.Flor@state.sd.us](mailto:Melissa.Flor@state.sd.us) or 605-773-6119

I grew up on a family farm north of Selby, SD. My parents farmed, raised beef cattle and for 10 years, we had dairy cows. I have a sister and 2 brothers who all moved out of state.

I attended South Dakota State University and graduated with a Sociology major with minors in history and political science. I received my special education endorsement through Black Hills State University. I had the opportunity to work in residential settings at Advance in Brookings and what is now Dakota Milestones in Chamberlain. My background has been a special education paraprofessional, high school social studies teacher, and 7-12 special education teacher. I told my principal, when preparing for a special education review, that this is the job I want to do someday. One year later, I started work for the Office of Special Education Programs. I am now the Accountability/RDA Specialist.

My husband works for Department of Environmental and Natural Resources. I have two children: A son, who is a freshman, loves football and hockey. A sixth grade girl who participates in dance, figure skating and softball. I enjoy traveling, outdoors, and spending time with family and friends.



**COLLEGE, CAREER AND LIFE READY**  
PREPARING SOUTH DAKOTA STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

(Click on the titles to go to the registration site)

### **2019 Summer Institute**

Building Quality Lives...  
Living. Learning. Working

June 13-14, 2019  
Arrowwood Resort at Cedar Shores,  
Oacoma, SD

The Summer Institute provides high school special educators and directors valuable information regarding transition to adulthood issues for students with disabilities. Continuing credits and graduate credits pending.

Featured Speaker, Karen Haase, will present on legal issues in transition. Other sessions will cover project skills, transition resources, mental health issues, supported decision-making.

Registrations due May 25th (see attached flyer).

### **2019 MTSS Summer Conference**

June 11-12, 2019  
Arrowwood Resort at Cedar Shores,  
Oacoma, SD  
Grad credit and CEUs available!

### **Registration is now open!**

Day one of this year's conference will feature Dr. Terry Scott. [Click here](#) to watch one of Dr. Scott's previous trainings

Day two will feature Dr. Karen Kemp from the 95% group.

Please contact  
[Rebecca.cain@state.sd.us](mailto:Rebecca.cain@state.sd.us) with any questions.

### **2019 Northern Plains Law Conference on Students with Disabilities**

#### **When**

Monday, September 30, 2019 – Wednesday, October 2, 2019

#### **Where**

Bismarck Event Center

#### **Registration Deadline**

Friday, September 20, 2019

### **2019 Fall IEP Workshop Registration will open on April 24, 2019.**

IEP workshop topics will cover IEP 101, Advance, and Transition Advance. A new Early Childhood IEP focused workshop will also be provided in two locations. (See attached flyer for more information.)

Contact Melissa Flor at  
[Melissa.Flor@state.sd.us](mailto:Melissa.Flor@state.sd.us) with any questions.

## Feeling the Springtime Burnout?

After the holidays both teachers and students may feel springtime burnout. Here are some ideas to help classrooms revitalize and end the year with a bang!

### **For Teachers:**

- ◇ Take time for yourself. If you are having a difficult day follow-up with an activity you enjoy.
- ◇ Take the time to take care of you! Your health is important.
- ◇ Make someone's day. Compliment another teacher, student, or parent.
- ◇ Smile when you don't feel like smiling.

### **For Students:**

- ◇ Have FUN! Take brain breaks, play puzzles or games, share jokes.
- ◇ Pair difficult activities with down time
- ◇ Experiment with new ways to instruct students or do assignments.
- ◇ Redecorate the classroom

### **How administrators can support their staff:**

- ◇ Provide peer, mentor, and principal support
- ◇ Performance Feedback
- ◇ Provide Access to Information
- ◇ Allow time off
- ◇ Provide opportunities for development and professional growth

### **Resources:**

[Edutopia](#)

[k12hrsolutions](#)

[National Association for Music Ed](#)

[Sped Connections](#)